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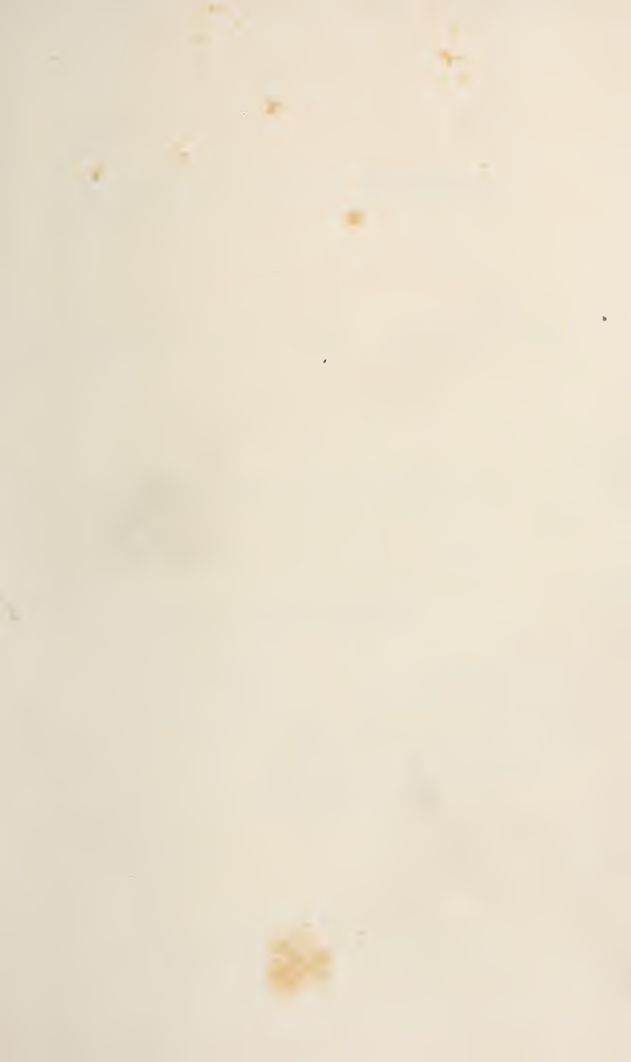
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THE

# Soldier of the Cross;

OR,

# LIFE OF ST. PAUL.

WRITTEN FOR THE

LAMBS OF THE FLOCK.

BY

JENNY MARSH PARKER.

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NEW YORK: A

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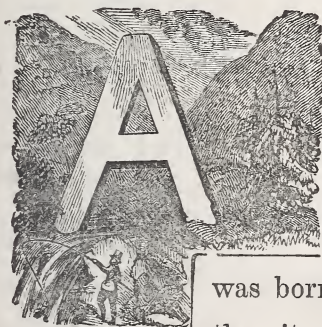


THE  
SOLDIER OF THE CROSS.

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CHAPTER I.

BEFORE THE DAWN.



A GREAT many miles from here, in a country you have never seen, the little Saul was born. The name of the city was Tarsus; and high, rocky mountains were on nearly all sides of it, so that you could scarcely look up any way, without seeing them, with their blue tops lost in the clouds.

It is nearly two thousand years ago, since Saul was born. That is a very long time, you think, and a great many things have happened since then; yet the little Saul has not been forgotten, nor the holy deeds he did after he had grown to be a man, and changed his name to Paul.

Now that we are talking about him when he was a little boy, we will call him *Saul*; for that is the name his Jewish father and mother gave him; and his little sister used to call him so — she that played with him, or sat with him upon their father's knees, and heard the Bible stories he could tell. You must remember, this was before Christ had preached on earth. Jesus was, also, then a child, in the care of his mother, Mary, who lived in the city of Nazareth, which was a long

journey from Tarsus. So, all the Bible stories that Saul's father might have told him, you can find in the Old Testament; for you know the New Testament was not written until after Christ had lived and died, and Saul grown to be a man.

Yes; and, when Saul was a little boy, in the rock-bound city of Tarsus, there were a number of youths—James, Peter, and others, playing, perhaps, on the shore of a lake in Judæa, or going out on the water with their fathers, who were fishermen, and little dreamed that their children would be remembered and loved two thousand years from then, and called St. Peter, and St. James. But God had his loving eyes upon all of those little boys, and was training them, without their

knowing it, to do a great work for him, when they should be men.

Saul was early taught to read and write; and we are told that he could speak both the Hebrew and Greek. He talked Greek most of the time, as you do English; but, as he was a Jew, he was, also, taught the Hebrew.

The Jews used to say, "If a man does not teach his son a trade, he teaches him to steal." That is very true; don't you think so? for, if a boy is brought up, as many are now-a-days, with no trade or profession by which he may earn his bread, does he not become idle, and waste his time among bad boys, and then, often, he is put in prison for stealing what he might have had, if he had worked to pay for it. Saul's father knew this; and, al-

though he was well off in the world, like a good man, he kept his son from mischief, when out of school, by giving him work to do.

Now, Saul's work was like nothing you have ever seen; but, if you should go to the country where he lived, you would find a great many people doing the same thing that he did *two thousand years ago*. He was a tent-maker. Now, you think I have told you wrong; for, you say, you have seen a great many tents, and you are sure they were not brought from across the sea. No; they were not: you are right there. Our tents are of canvas, and are made here; but those that little Saul stitched upon were different altogether.

In the wild mountains around his home,

there were a great many goats that had long, shaggy hair; and, from that, the people of the country made a thick, coarse cloth, that would not wet through, nor tear easily. It was about as good as our gutta-percha, or oil-cloth, and was made into sailors' coats, into cloth for tents, and into sails for vessels. Saul's work was to cut out the cloth in the shape wanted, and then to sew it together in large pieces, which were to be hung over poles, and thus form the tent.

And so Saul passed away his boyhood; and we are told that he sometimes worked very late at night; for he was not idle, but spent every minute of his time as he should, either at his tasks, or work, or in a little harmless play; for boys can not work without play; and it is not right

they should. God was fitting him, every day of his life, for the toil he was to go through, in after years, for the sake of Christ, the Lord.

I have told you that his parents were Jews, and that he was brought up to believe just as they did, and they believed that, when the Messiah should come, it would be as a great king, that would make the Jews the strongest nation of the earth. The Bible did not tell them this; but they thought so; and so they would not believe that Jesus, our blessed Lord, who was born in the village of Bethlehem, was their Saviour. Saul was taught to think thus; and he would have been very angry if any one had told him he would some day preach against the Jews, and love the Christ they would not own. But the

same Father that loves and keeps all children, was very near to Saul, and was leading him in the right way.

When he was about eleven or fourteen years old, he was sent to Jerusalem to school; and that, you know, was the holy city of the Jews. There, he had one of the most celebrated teachers in the land, one that loved his pupil, and hoped he would one day become a great man among the Jews. Yes; and Saul hoped the same thing: they did not know what God was going to do.

After he had studied at Jerusalem several years, it is very probable that he went back to Tarsus again; and, during many years after, he read, and did all he could to know more. Tarsus was a large city, and full of learned men and great



schools; and he had every chance to become wise. Within these years, while he was bending over his books, a great event, yes, a very great event had taken place in the world. Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour, had lived his holy life, and died his bitter death; but the heart of the great scholar, Saul, had not once been touched by his sufferings. Saul was a Jew; and Jesus was hated by them.

And the Church, of which Saul was yet to be the great apostle, had been founded—that is, begun; and, although it was then very small, it was slowly growing up to be what it is now: for the Church that Christ began, when here upon earth, is still growing; and you have much cause for thanking God, my dear little children, that you are within its fold.

May you be kept there, and never, never, wander away.

Yes, the Church was founded; and Saul was one of its greatest persecutors. Do you know what a *persecutor* is? Let me tell you what Saul did; and, perhaps, you will understand me then. He was a Jew, and believed that all of those who loved Jesus Christ, and did what he had told them to do, and tried to have others do the same, should *be put to death*. He was the chief persecutor of St. Stephen. Do you remember the sad story of that holy man, who was stoned to death by the Jews, because he preached what Christ had taught him to? The sixth and seventh chapters of the *Acts of the Apostles* will tell you about it; but here are a few verses.

“Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

“And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet, whose name was Saul.

“And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

“And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

“And Saul was consenting unto his death.”

Stephen was a holy man, and one that loved the Lord; and Saul helped to kill him. Would any one have thought then,

that that cruel man would soon be preaching the very gospel Stephen had died for? Oh, no! for Saul's heart grew more bitter every day against the Christians; and, if his will had been done instead of God's will, they would all have been killed, and we had known nothing of the Church we love so much. Some of you may wonder that God did not leave Saul in his wickedness. Does he leave you and me, when we sin against him?

Saul stayed in Jerusalem some time after the death of Stephen, making the Christians to suffer very much. He put heavy chains upon them, and threw them into dark prisons. He whipped them upon their bare backs, till the blood came in streams, and threatened to put them all to death. Many did give up their faith in

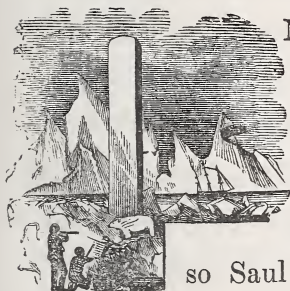
Christ. Perhaps, that shocks you very much; but think awhile, my dear child. Was it any worse for those poor men and women, who were made to suffer so, to leave Christ, than it is for you? And do you not leave him whenever naughty thoughts and angry feelings are in your heart?





## CHAPTER II.

### A LIGHT FROM HEAVEN.



IN Damascus, a most beautiful city, not far from Jerusalem, there was a number of Christians; and so Saul thought he would go there, and put as many in chains as he could, and bring them to Jerusalem. But, in wickedness, he had done evil to the people of the Lord long enough; and it was then God's good time to have the victory.

I can not tell you about the conversion of Saul, (by conversion, is meant a change of heart, or becoming a Christian) in words more simple than those of the Bible. In the ninth chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*, we are told that, “as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined about him a light from heaven :

“And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? \* \* It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

“And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what will thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

“And the men that journeyed with him



stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

“And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

“And he was *three days without sight*, and neither did eat nor drink.”

Did he enter the great city of Damascus as he thought he should? No; but, blind and helpless, he was led through its splendid streets, until brought to the house of Judas—not Judas the traitor; and there he was, for three days, without a friend to cheer him, or a hope that he should ever behold the light again. Poor Saul! but the Lord was not forgetting him.

There was a Christian man living in Damascus, by the name of Ananias; and

the Lord came to him in a vision, or dream, by night, and told him all about Saul, where he was, and that he must go and comfort him. Ananias was, at first, afraid to do as the Lord told him: for he had often heard of Saul, and knew how cruel he was to the Christians; and it was hard for him to believe that he had been converted. But he did as the Lord told him, and went where Saul was, and laid his hands upon his head, and called him his brother, and told him of the heavenly vision he had. Then Saul's eyes were opened, and he saw around him. The blindness of his heart was gone; and he had sweet hope and faith in Jesus Christ.

And, now, Saul was a Christian, and not afraid to preach what he knew to be true.

It was rather hard for the Jews to believe that Saul, instead of putting the Christians to death, was calling them, in sincere love, his brethren. They laid cruel plots to put him in chains, and watched the gates of the city, lest he should escape. Cities were then built with a high, thick wall around them, and a large gate on each side. One of the brethren, whose house formed a part of the wall, and had a window on the outside, let him down in a basket one night, and so he made his escape.

He went to Arabia, where he lived alone for some time; as the Arabs were too rude and wild to be his associates. He spent his time in prayer, and in reading the Holy Bible; for he knew that the

Lord had sent him to that lonely spot, to get ready for the work he was to do.

It was then three years from the time he left Jerusalem, to go to Damascus, to put the Christians in chains. You know how God changed his heart. He now left Arabia, and went back to Jerusalem. He thought all the Christians would be glad to see him, and do what they could to make him happy among them. But, when they heard that he was in the city, and wanted to meet with them, they were afraid; for they remembered how cruel he had been—how he had killed the holy Stephen, and had gone to Damascus, to put their brethren in chains. They could not believe that so wicked a man as Saul, of Tarsus, had become a Christian. How very bad Saul must

have felt about this; and how lonely he must have been, with no one to welcome him to a happy home, after his long journey from Arabia? But God does all things right; and he did this for Saul's good; and Saul bore it as a Christian should, without thinking that his Lord was doing wrong to him.

But, after a while, Peter and James, two of the disciples, found him, and believed him to be a Christian, and opened to him their hearts and homes. Soon, all the disciples knew and loved Saul; and there was none among them that preached the gospel so boldly as he.

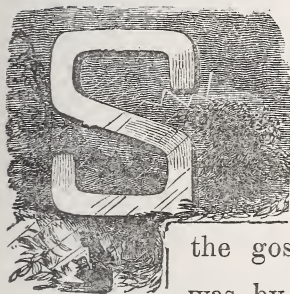
The Jews hated him, and laid plots to kill him; but Saul, trusting in the Lord, was not afraid of those wicked men. His brethren tried to have him leave the

city; but he would not: for it was there St. Stephen had been put to death; and there he wanted to redeem the evil he had done, by doing good. But the Lord came to him in a vision, and told him to leave Jerusalem, and Saul did as he was bade.

And then he went back to Tarsus, the beautiful city where he was born, and where he had spent most of his life. The Bible does not tell us how he was met by his Jewish parents and his sister, or how they felt because he was a Christian. Perhaps, they were dead; but, if they were not, we know Saul talked to them about the Christ he loved, and tried to have them believe as he did.

### CHAPTER III.

#### OUT IN THE WORLD.



AUL did not stay at Tarsus long, but went out into the world, to preach the gospel of Christ. It was by no means safe for him to do it; and, if he had not loved and trusted in God, he never would have done so; for, wherever he went, there were wicked men, that would kill him if they could, for preaching what he did. But Saul knew that the Lord would take care

of him, and so he dared to preach before the kings and great men ; and, as he had read many books, and was very wise, he could do a great deal of good.

Do you know what it is to work a miracle? Christ and his apostles, of whom Saul was one, used to work miracles. It is to do some strange or wonderful thing by the help of God—something which no one could do without that help, so as to lead people to believe in the Lord.

Saul's first miracle was at the city of Paphos, on the island of Cyprus. The governor of the city, whose name was Sergius Paulus, sent for Saul to come to the large hall of his house, and preach the word of God. Saul went, and was doing good, when a person by the name of Elymas, who was afraid that the governor



would become a Christian, began talking very wickedly against all Saul had said. Saul looked fearlessly at him, and spake these words :

“ ‘O full of all subtilty, and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

“ And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness ; and he went out seeking some one to lead him by the hand.”

Then Sergius Paulus knew that Saul was a man sent by God, and he believed in Christ.

It was at this time that Saul took the name of Paul—the name by which he

was ever after called, and is now known through the wide world. It is thought that he named himself Paul after Sergius *Paulus*, of whom I have just told you, and before whom he worked his *first miracle*.

Paul's courage increased every day, no matter what happened to him. Boldly he preached the Christian faith; and the Lord blessed his labors, by adding many to the Church.

All that this good apostle did in his long journeys by sea and land, as he preached the gospel to many nations, can not be told in this little book; but it shall relate to you some of the most important things he did.

At Lystra, he saw a poor man that had been lame ever since his birth. He looked

at Paul—only looked at him, without speaking a word—but Paul saw *faith* in his eyes, and said to him, in a loud voice, “Rise, and stand on thy feet;” and the lame man sprang up, and walked.

And it was in this same city of Lystra, where Paul came very near to death. The people were angry with him for preaching as he did, and pelted him with stones, just as Stephen was. Then they dragged him out of the city, and left him alone. They thought he was dead; but he was not: God willed for him to live longer. So, when his brethren came where he was, never hoping to find him alive, he surprised them by rising up, and walking back to the city with them.

At Philippi, where Silas and he had been sent by the voice of the Lord, they

were seized, in the street, by an angry mob, who tore their clothes from their backs, and then whipped them with bundles of rough rods. Then they were thrown into prison—hungry, faint, and bleeding. The jailor was commanded to keep them safe.

What do you think Paul and Silas did in that cold, dark prison? Did they keep thinking that God had done an unkind and unjust thing to them, in letting wicked men beat them so, and shut them up in such a place? Did they say to each other that God did not care for them, and, if they were ever out again, they would not trouble themselves to preach, but would do something to give them comfort in this life? Think you they talked like that? Ah, no! the Bible tells us that, “Paul and

Silas prayed, and sang praises to God.” And the Lord heard their prayers. At midnight, an earthquake shook down the prison, and the doors of the cells flew open. But Paul and Silas did not run away, as thieves would have done. So, when the jailor came to their cells, in a terrible fright lest they should be gone, (and he would have killed himself if they had been,) Paul calmly cried out to him, “Do thyself no harm; for we are all here.” Then the jailor called for a light, and fell down before Paul and Silas, saying, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They answered, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, with all thy house.” Then the jailor took them out of their cells, and washed

their sores, and gave them food ; and then they baptized him and all his family.

At Thessalonica, when he was not preaching, he worked at his old trade of tent-making, thus earning a little money with which he could buy his bread, so that he should not have to live upon his poor brethren, who were always willing to do what they could for him. Paul was a noble man, and, therefore, not ashamed to work, even at the humble trade of tent-making. But he had to flee from this place ; as the Jews became so angry toward him, they would have taken his life, if they could.

At Corinth, one of the most beautiful cities of old Greece, Paul stopped for some time, and preached of Christ, without fear. You have heard of the letters he

used to write to the little churches that were then springing up in the world. He had founded many of them, and they had been made strong by his preaching; and, when he was far away, he would write them letters, telling how to do good and keep on serving the Lord. We have these letters in the New Testament, and we should read them often, and thank God for them. The first of these letters was written, at Corinth, to his dear brethren in Thessalonica, the place where he had worked at his old trade of tent-making, and is called, "*The first Epistle of Paul, the Apostle, to the Thessalonians.*"

Paul never said he was tired of working so hard for God, nor did he ask to rest awhile, but every day and every hour he

gave to the Lord ; and, for that reason, he was so much in danger of losing his life, that he wrote, in one of his letters, these words, “ I die daily.”

Paul wanted to go to Jerusalem again ; and, when he told his brethren he thought of doing so, they were grieved, and tried to make him stay with them ; for they loved him dearly, and feared the hatred of the Jews, if he should fall into their power. But Paul felt it was his duty to go ; and he was too firm, in what he knew to be right, to give up to the fears of others, and too bold to be afraid ; so, he bade them good-by, and, asking God to bless them, started for Jerusalem.

It was in the month of May that he got to the city. Several of the apostles came



out to meet him, and to tell him how glad they were he had come to them again.

Now, at that very time, there was a great feast in the city, called the feast of Pentecost. It took place every year; and the Jews, from all parts of the world, came to it, so that the city was more than full. And, in that great crowd of people, there were many that knew the face of Paul; and their hearts were so full of hate toward him they would do most any thing to put him to death. So, one day, when Paul went into the temple, to worship, some of these wicked men spread a false story about him, and the crowd came rushing upon him, beating him, and crying out loudly against him. They would have killed him; but some of the chief officers heard the great noise, and went to the

spot as quickly as they could, and took Paul away from the mob. They unjustly bound his wrists with chains, and then carried him off to prison; and many thousands of Jews ran after him, crying, "Away with him!"

When Paul was rescued, so that the mob could not tear him in pieces, the chief captain, who was called Lysias, talked to him, and found out he was not so bad a man as he had thought he was. Then Paul stood up on a high rock, far above the heads of the crowd, and spake to them in Hebrew—the language they loved. They were very still at first, and listened, as he told them how he had been born a Jew, and brought up in their schools, and how he had persecuted the Christians, until God changed his heart.

But suddenly they cried out again, "Away with him; he is not fit to live!" But they could not touch him; for he was in the hands of the soldiers.

And then Paul, with heavy chains upon him, was cast into prison; but his sleep, that night, was the sweet sleep of a Christian, who fears not what men may do unto him, as long as the Lord is on his side.

The next day was that of Paul's trial. He was brought before seventy men, who were to hear why he was put in prison, and to say whether he should be let out or not. This trial was a very unfair one; and, in it, Paul was treated badly. That night, he was taken back to his cell again.

At midnight, the Lord came to Paul in a dream, and told him to be of good

cheer, for he should live to preach of him in Rome, as he had in Jerusalem. This made Paul very happy; for he was willing to live longer, and work and suffer more, if it was the will of God.

That same night, forty Jews made a vow together, that they would neither eat nor drink, until they had killed Paul. Their plan was, to have him brought out for another trial, and then seize and murder him, as he passed from the prison to the great hall. But a nephew of Paul's — a son of the sister I have told you about — heard of the wicked thing that the forty Jews were planning to do, and went to Paul with it. Paul sent him quickly to the captain, with his news, who, as soon as he heard it, called some of his officers, and told them to be ready, by nine

that evening, with two hundred soldiers on foot, seventy on horseback, and two hundred spearmen, all of whom were to go, with Paul, to a town near by, where he was to be put in charge of the governor.

Thus, Paul was taken away from the forty Jews, who had made a vow that they would not eat or drink, till they had killed him. But God did not allow them to carry out their wicked vow.

Paul was now at a place called Cæsa-rea; and there he was a prisoner for two long years. He had a great deal of trouble, and much to make him sad; but he bore it all like a Christian. He preached when he could; and, once, when he was brought before the governor, Felix, he preached Christ so boldly that the great ruler trembled; for he knew that Paul

spoke the truth. But, alas! he gave it but a moment's thought, and then went on in sin, as before.

While Paul was in prison so long, he did not once doubt the promise of the Lord, that he should preach the gospel in Rome; therefore, he was not surprised when told he was to be sent to Rome, to be judged by Cæsar, the *emperor of the world*.

A body of soldiers were to go with him: for he was a prisoner; and Felix did not know but he would run away, if he could; but we are very sure he would not have done so.

They were to go by sea; and it was upon this journey the shipwreck, of which you may have heard, took place. They had been out on the water several days, when a dreadful storm arose, tearing their

sails in pieces, and breaking their masts in splinters. Think of them, out on that wide sea, that was foaming and dashing around them, and leaping up in big waves that seemed to touch the sky, in a ship that seemed ready, every moment, to break to pieces.

All but Paul were frightened, and thought they should never see the land, and their dear friends again. Some were fathers, and had left little ones like you at home; and they felt very bad to think they might never see them again. But Paul still trusted in the Lord, knowing he would keep his word, and, no matter how wild the storm was, he should get to Rome.

Oh, that was a dreadful time! they did not see the sun nor the stars for several

days; and that was all they used to have to guide their ships by. They had no bread, and were very faint with hunger. They had thrown nearly every thing overboard, to keep the ship from sinking. But Paul kept praying; and God heard him, and came to him, as he had before, in a vision, and spake comforting words to him, telling him to "fear not." So Paul spake aloud to all on the ship, and said. "Now I tell you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me, this night, the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo! God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore,



sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit, we must be cast upon a certain island."

These words gave comfort to all in the ship; and, sure enough, one night, they heard the sound of waves dashing against a beach, which told them they were near land. Oh, how happy they all were, and how Paul thanked the Lord for his mercy!

They could not go to the shore in the ship, as it was not safe for them to do so; but most of them jumped into the wild waves, and swam to land—and not one of them was drowned.

It was the famous island of Malta; and Paul, with the rest of the crew, went

quickly to work, and picked up sticks, with which to make a fire, so that they might dry and warm themselves. When he was throwing the wood upon the blaze, a large serpent crawled out of the fire, and wound itself around his hand. All were very much frightened but Paul, who shook off the reptile into the flames. As the snake had not bitten him, nor poisoned him in the least, those ignorant people thought that he was a god, and looked upon him with great awe and wonder. But, to Paul, it was a fresh promise from God that he would protect him.

The people of the island gave them something to eat, and did what they could to help them. Three months they

staid at Malta; and, in that time, the Apostle did much good. We never hear of his having been idle, or resting from his labors, whether he was in prison, or upon a bed of sickness. His whole life was given to the Lord.





## CHAPTER IV.

### OUT OF PRISON.



**T**RULY, as God had promised, St. Paul did see Rome ; and, before he reached the gates of the city, he met bands of his brethren, who had heard he was coming, and, full of joy, went forth to meet him. When Paul saw them, “he thanked God, and took courage.”

He was treated much better, in Rome, than he had feared he would be. He was

not put in prison, to wait for his trial; but he hired a house, and lived in it. Yet he had to be chained by his wrist to a soldier. That was not very pleasant, to be sure; but it was much better than living in a cold, damp cell; for now he could visit with his brethren, and preach the gospel. His house was a little church; and there he waited for his trial before Nero, the great emperor.

Nero was then twenty-four years old; but a more wicked man never lived. He was very handsome; but bad men often are, you know. There is hardly a wicked thing that he did not do. He killed a great many of his friends—yes, and his own wife and mother. No one could take him up and hang him for it: for he was emperor of the whole world, and had

the power to kill whom he pleased. It was in the hands of this sinful man the holy Paul had fallen. Can you think of any two men so little alike as St. Paul and Nero must have been?

The time for the trial came; and Paul was called before Nero. God governed the heart of the wicked man; and Paul was not put to death, but made free, and could preach wherever he wanted to.

Then he took long journeys, preaching of Christ wherever he went; and the Church grew strong every day. In the time of this good apostle, it was not so easy for a man to say he was a Christian as it is now; for then they would often kill those that were, or take away all they had in the world. And there were little children, like you, whose pa-

rents loved Jesus Christ, and so they were put in prison with them, and sometimes killed.

Should you not thank God that you live in a better time, when you can go to church, and sing his praise, and pray to him, without fear of being put to death! When you hear the name of St. Paul, you should remember these things, and all that good man did and suffered.

One night, a great fire broke out in the large circus of Rome; and, for a week, it was burning as fast as it could; so, you may know something of what a fire it was. The beautiful homes of the rich, the huts of the poor, and splendid public buildings that cost a great deal of money, were all burned up; and many people had



to go to the tombs of the dead to find a shelter.

What do you think that Nero did, while the city was burning, and the people crying around him? He played some merry music, and *laughed*. Only think what a cruel man he was!

Every one thought, and almost knew, that Nero set fire to the city, just from wickedness. He heard that they laid it to him, and was so afraid they would murder him, he charged the Christians with the crime, and said they must be punished for it. His lie was believed; and, then, alas! for those that loved our Jesus.

I can not begin to tell you all they suffered. He covered a great many of them with pitch, and set them on fire at night, to light the streets of the city.

Others he sewed up in the skins of wild beasts, and let the dogs hunt, and tear them in pieces. Others he put into bags of live snakes. He did all he could to make them suffer long, before they died.

Paul was cast into a dark cell, where not one sunbeam could peep in; and there he was shut up for some time. He knew he should be put to death; but he was not troubled or afraid, but had sweet peace in the Lord, "I have fought a good fight," he said. "I have finished my course. I have kept the faith: henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all those that love his appearing."

Happy Paul! blest with a peace you may have, if you trust in the good Lord.

We are not sure of the manner in which Paul's life was taken, as we have no account of the matter that can firmly be relied upon; but it is said, that he was tied to a stake, and beheaded—that is, his head was cut off.

Thus lived and died Saul, of Tarsus, who is now known, through the wide world, by the beloved name of St. Paul. He did very much for the Church we love; and, if we strive, by prayer, to make our lives as useful as his, to trust in the Lord as he did, and make Christians of wicked men, we may hope for a crown in heaven, like his.

Paul died, a Christian. Let me tell you how Nero died.

He kept thinking of his many wicked deeds, and became so very unhappy he could not rest day nor night. Instead of going to God, and being sorry for what he had done, and trying to do better, he went on worse and worse. At last, the people of Rome rose up in anger at him, and said they would kill him. He had heard of it; and, one midnight, barefooted, and but partly dressed, he sprang to the back of his horse, covered up his face with a napkin, and rode away from the city as fast as he could. The people ran after, cursing him. He hid himself in a cave, underground; and there he cut his throat with his dagger.

My dear child, which are you the most like, St. Paul or Nero? Nero never prayed to God; *do you?* Nero got

angry at little things, and would fly in a passion, when any thing did not please him; *do you?* Nero cared only for the things of this life, without a hope or thought for heaven; *do you?* Nero died in his sins; *will you?*

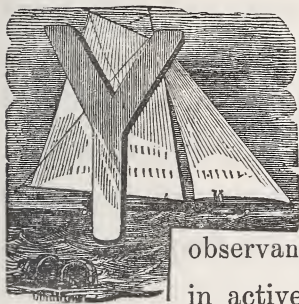
Paul loved the Lord; *do you?* He prayed to him very often, and believed that he would take care of him; *do you?* He had a great many things to make him cross and ugly; but he was never so, after he put on Christ; *are you?* Paul died, a Christian; and there is a crown laid up for him in heaven; how will it be with you?

“The Lord bless you and keep you.”



## CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.

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YOU know, my dear children, that our church aims, by her order and observance, to have us keep in active remembrance the holy and most important facts in her history. By looking at your Prayer-books, you will find a Table of Feasts, in which is "The Conversion of St. Paul." You have read of his journey to Damascus, and the great light that burst upon him; and so have learned how God converted one

of the most bold and holy champions Christ and his Church ever had, and why the feast called the Conversion of St. Paul is commemorated. The twenty-fifth day of January is the day observed. I am going to give the collect, the epistle, and the gospel, for that day; and, by reading them through carefully, you will not only have the Bible account of that most wonderful event, but, I trust, will appreciate the order in which the Prayer-book presents it to you.

### THE COLLECT.

**O** GOD, who, through the preaching of the blessed apostle Saint Paul, hast caused the light of the gospel to shine throughout the world; grant, we beseech thee, that we, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show forth our thankfulness unto thee for the same, by following the holy doctrine which he taught; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*



## FOR THE EPISTLE.

**A**ND Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the High Priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that, if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And, as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and, when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord, in a vision, Ananias: And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go

into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias, coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard, by many, of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house, and, putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, (even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest,) hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight, forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?

But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews, which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

## THE GOSPEL.

PETER answered, and said unto Jesus, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee, what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first.



## P R A Y E R .

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JESUS, hear a little child,  
That is praying now to thee ;  
Make me truthful, kind, and mild  
Like the good St. Paul I'd be.

I would love thee as he loved ;  
I would serve thee all my days ;  
I would bear thy holy Cross ;  
Love to pray, and sing thy praise.

Let me not forget, dear Lord,  
All Paul suffered here below —  
How he labored for thy sake,  
And the Church we cherish so ;

How he lay, in prisons cold,  
Many a long and dreary day ;  
How he trusted in thy word,  
And did never cease to pray.

Let me not forget the crown  
That, in heaven, he will wear,  
As a glory round his head,  
And our God will place it there ;—

Let me not forget, but try  
A bright crown, like his, to win.  
Keep, oh ! keep me in thy arms ;  
Shield my heart from every sin.

Jesus, hear a little child,  
That is praying now to thee ;  
Make me truthful, kind, and mild ;  
Like the good St. Paul I'd be.









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